

Testimony on Bill 11(2013), CD2 for Fiscal Year 2014

Presented to the Council Chair Ernest Y. Martin, and Council Members
Monday, June 3, 2013

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Adult Friends for Youth
Clinical Specialist

Council members, I am here to testify in support of Bill 11 (2013), CD2 which will include in the City's proposed Operating Budget, \$200,000 for the Adult Friends for Youth program serving at-risk/alienated youth at Farrington, Campbell, Kapolei and Leilehua High Schools as well as Dole Middle School.

Growing up on the mainland, I witnessed poverty, gangs, drugs and violence. The exposure led me to the career I have chosen today, which is to work with an underserved population through means of therapy. I had intended on taking my knowledge and serving populations in my home town of Portland, Oregon. However my exposure to Hawaii's vulnerable youth population led me to Adult Friends for Youth.

Adult Friends for Youth is a valuable agency in its unique approach to at-risk youth. There is no agency that is able to effectively transition a group into more positive, pro-social activities by using the influence of peers such as Adult Friends for Youth.

I have witnessed the generational shift in gang mentality within communities such as Kuhio Park Terrace that highlight Adult Friends for Youth's 27 year presence. We hope to continue to make the difference that has been so integral to our communities by aiding these youth in realizing their potential. It is for these reasons that I ask for your support in Bill 11 (2013), CD2.

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